

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GY

SUBJECT: SIXTY-THREE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA STUDENTS ARE FIRST

DRAFTEES OF GUYANA NATIONAL SERVICE

REF: A) GEORGETOWN A-102 B) GEORGETOWN A-103

C) GEORGETOWN A-113

1. SIXTY-THREE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA STUDENTS ARE FIRST SIZEABLE GROUP DRAFTED IN GUYANA'S NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME, THOUGH A FEW WINNERS OF GOG SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OVERSEAS STUDY LAST YEAR WERE REQUIRED TO DO PRIOR NATIONAL SERVICE. THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO REPORT TO THE INTERIOR NS CAMP AT KIMBIA FOR TRAINING ON NOV 17.

STUDENTS WERE MADE AWARE OF GOVT'S EVENTUAL INTENTION TO DRAFT THEM WHEN PM BURNHAM ANNOUNCED IN MAY THE CONDITION OF ONE YEAR OF DUTY IN GNS FOR UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE (REF B). HOWEVER, RECENT PREWS STATEMENTS CONCERNING INABILITY OF THE GNS TO BEGIN MASSIVE DRAFT DUE TO LIMITED FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT ITS CENTERS CONVINCED MOST STUDENTS THAT DRAFT WAS NOT IMMINENT. STUDENT PROPOSALS FOR AN ALTERNATIVE GOVT SERVICE WERE IN PROCESS OF BEING PRESENTED TO UNIVERSITY'S VICE CHANCELLOR AT TIME DRAFT NOTICE WAS RECEIVED.

2. MAJOR OPPOSITION TO DRAFT COMES FROM MOSCOW-LINE PEOPLES PRO- UNCLASSIFIED

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GRESSIVE PARTY AND THE EAST INDIAN COMMUNITY, WHO HAVE ACTIVELY

OPPOSED GNS (REF A). THIS COMMUNITY IS ALARMED BY FACT THAT 25 OF THE INDUCTEES ARE WOMEN AND 53 ARE OF EAST INDIAN ORIGIN. EAST INDIANS VIEW THE IMBALANCE BETWEEN RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE UNIVERSITY (ABOUT HALF EAST INDIAN) AND RACIAL BACKGROUNDS OF THOSE DRAFTED AS A FORM OF DISCRIMINATION.

3. ACCORDING TO PPP'S NEWSPAPER, THE MIRROR, ALL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HAD TO FILL OUT GNS REGISTRATION CARDS WHILE REGISTERING FOR 1975-76 ACADEMIC YEAR. THEY WERE INFORMED BY GNS REGISTRAR, LT. THORNE, THAT FAILUTE TO CLMPLTE THE FORMS WOULD RESULT IN "GRAVE CONSEQUENCES". THE DRAFT OF THE FIRST 63 WITHOUT ANY FURTHER ADVANCE WARNING HAS LED OTHER STUDENTS TO REFUSE TO COMPLETE THE FORMS. ACCORDING TO MIRROR, SOME OF DRAFTED STUDENTS WALKED OUT OF NATIONAL SERVICE HEADQUARTERS AFTER REPORTING AND ARE AWAITING VOT ACTION ON THEIR REFUSAL TO BE INDUCTED.

4. ACADEMIC BOARD OF UNIVERSITY IS REPORTED TO HAVE MET TO DISCUSS ISSUE, AND ISSUED A STATMENT OB OBJECTION TO THE ILL-TIMED DRAFT TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

5. COMMENT. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE LIST OF DRAFTEES WAS SENT TO CAMPUS A FEW DAYS AFTER PNC WON A MAJORITY OF EXECUTIVE SEATS IN THE U.G. STUDENTS ASSOCIATION ELECTION (REF C). PNC-SUPPORTED STUDENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT LAURIE LEWIS, WHO IS ALSO AN ASSISTANT POLICE COMMISSIONER, IS REPORTED TO BE OUT OF COUNTRY AND UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT ON DRAFT. WITH PNC CONTROLLING BOTH THE ADMINISTRATION AND STUDENT AFFAIRS, COMPULSORY DUTY IN NATIONAL SERVICE APPEARS TO BE A NON-NEGOTIABLE ITEM. A STUDENT STRIKE AND/OR REFUSAL OF INDUCTION BY A MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO ARE DRAFTED ARE NOW BEING CONSIDERED AT U.G.

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